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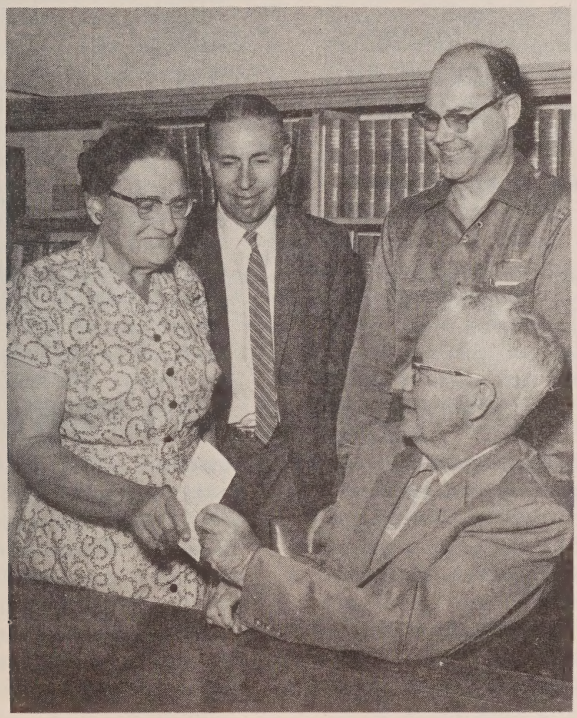
The
NATURE
Conservancy News

Volume 10, No. 5 & 6 Washington, D.C. November-December 1960

NATURE CONSERVANCY FUNDS PAY OFF



Miss E. Genevieve Gillette, President, Michigan Parks Association, giving to Michigan Conservation Commission Chairman Joseph P. Rahilly deed to 80 acres of land on South Manitou Island, off Sleeping Bear dune. Mr. Paul Thompson, next, Michigan representative of The Nature Conservancy, and Dr. Robert O. Beleher, Chairman of the Parks Association, and head of the Department of Natural Sciences at Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti.

"During the early part of July, the last parcel of land needed to round out the State of Michigan's South Manitou Island, Natural Area Reserve was presented to the Michigan Conservation Commission as a gift of the Michigan Parks Association. The area, on the west side of South Manitou Island in Lake Michigan, is one of fine duneland and forest, with a rich flora that includes that State's largest known balsam fir, as well as a white cedar that is thought to be the world's largest.

Legal problems associated with acquisition of the eighty-acre tract, which has been eyed for its stand of timber, made private funds necessary to place it in public ownership; the necessary money was donated to the Association's land acquisition fund by the Michigan Natural Areas Council, which in turn obtained it as an interest-free loan from The Nature Conservancy of Washington, D. C.

The NATURE Conservancy News

A Publication of the Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is an independent member-governed organization dedicated to saving America's heritage of wild nature. Its specific objective is to preserve natural areas as "living museums." Such tracts are precious for their scientific, educational and aesthetic values. They provide a home for many living things that would otherwise be destroyed by our civilization.

The work of the organization began in 1917 under the direction of a committee of the Ecological Society of America. In 1946, the Ecologists Union was formed to take over the task. In 1950 the name was changed to The Nature Conservancy; incorporation in the District of Columbia took place in 1951.

Nature Conservancy now has a national membership of approximately 4,000. It operates through a series of chapters, of which 19 have been organized to date. It has acquired, by gift or purchase 34 nature preserves in 11 states, having an area of some 6,400 acres. These range in size from one acre to 3,000 acres. Nature Conservancy is now actively working toward the acquisition of additional natural areas in five additional states, the total area of which is about 10,000 acres.

The members of the Nature Conservancy invite you to join in its work. Membership is open to both individuals and organizations. A contribution of $5.00 or more entitles you to annual membership, one of $200 or more to life membership, and one of $1,000 or more to patron membership. Your contribution is an allowable income tax deduction.

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NATURAL AREAS AS A CULTURAL FORCE

The role of parks and natural areas as a cultural force was the theme of an important address by National Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth before the Fifth World Forestry Congress, Seattle, September 7, 1960.

Among other things, Director Wirth said:

"The (National Park Service) act gave form and substance to a specific type of land use. Scenery, natural and historic objects, and wildlife were given status as resources that were to be conserved. Enjoyment is the prime product of conserving those resources and thus is the end product of park use. Enjoyment and conservation, however, had to be carried out in harmony with each other so as not to diminish the inherent returns from the resources and deprive those of future generations of their right to enjoyment.

"Enjoyment is an intangible thing, it is neither standardized nor homogeneous, it varies with every individual, and it spans a wide range of personal likes and emotions. The deriving of gratification from the resources of a park does not give license to satisfying or providing for the whole realm of individual gratification. Uncontrolled and undirected, the gratification of desire can be a destructive force and just as harmful in the long run as the removal or alteration of the basic resources.

"Parks yield cultural and inspirational products--knowledge, refreshment and aesthetic gratification required by all people--and these are a necessary part of living, something we need to sustain and improve our lives. These things add to one's urge to live and grow, and without them civilizations may gradually fade away. It is incumbent on a nation, then, to provide the opportunities for healthy growth. Parks are part and parcel of all those things that in combination contribute to a higher level of cultural achievement and the sustenance of a higher civilization."

NEW VOICES

For Nature Preservation

During the recent past, three statements in support of Natural Areas have been widely distributed. They have come from somewhat unexpected sources - the Royal Bank of Canada, Montreal, and a director of Standard Oil of New Jersey.

The Royal Bank of Canada has devoted two entire issues of its monthly newsletter to "The Relationship of Man and Nature," and "Conserving and Using Our Open Spaces."

David A. Shepard, a graduate of M.I.T., and a director of Standard Oil Company (New Jersey) wrote in *The Atlantic Monthly* for October, 1957, an article, "The Wise Use of Natural Resources." Reprints may be obtained from the Company's New York office, Room 1626, 30 Rockefeller Plaza.

The Royal Bank of Canada says that civilized man has ruthlessly tampered with the natural world, meddling with a machine of whose total design and purpose he is ignorant. Life is correspondence with environment. One of the most repulsive of the destructive results of human expansion is the poisoning of rivers.

Biologists are aware of the need to preserve nature's balance, but only public opinion can make application of needed techniques effective. Our hope is in education, in people who take the long view.

"If we wish to preserve our present way of life," the Bank's statement on "Man and Nature" concludes, "We must come to terms with what is left of natural forests, soil, water and wildlife, and it will be on terms laid down by nature, not imposed by us. Any wrong which nature may for centuries commit, she has centuries to repair, but we, whose days are short, must walk warily lest we become the victims of the wasteland we make."

What human beings need for survival in a world containing powerful enemies, physical and mental, cannot be summed up in the food-shelter-clothing formula, the Bank states in its Open Spaces letter. They need to be linked together in society and to be able to break apart as individuals. Open spaces provide a domain where nature has a way of soothing our fretfulness and worries.

What kind of open spaces do we need? They range from tracts of thousands of square miles to picnic areas for a table or two.

They should be within relatively easy reach of everyone. Much of the difference between towns in their general goodness of life for good people depends upon their energetic provision of open spaces - parks big enough for all-day excursions, a wooded area, a protected place where wildflowers grow, a clear stream and a pool.

New Law Needed

Some device of law should be found to protect these things for the people for all time. As things are now, laws of a few years ago can be altered or removed from the books to allow use of park land for electric sub-stations, sewage plants, roads, parking lots or other accessories of our mechanized life.

"In earth's long history," the Bank concludes, "one species after another of animal and plant have disappeared, and one culture after another disappeared because of inability to adjust to environmental change. Today it is necessary for mankind to regulate the use of natural resources and to manage earth's remaining capital if it is to survive. We can adapt ourselves understandingly if we go into our open places, to learn by personal experience in field and forest, on mountains and beside the streams, that mankind is dependent upon the living resources of the earth and must do its part to conserve them."

How to conserve them is the problem.

The problems we face in conserving natural resources are laborious and complex, writes Standard Oil Director Shepard.

The preservation of even small bits of marshlands or woods representing the last stands of irreplaceable biotic communities, he says, is interwoven with the red tape of law, conflicting local interest, the overlapping jurisdiction of

governmental and private conservation bodies, and an intricate tangle of economic and social considerations. During the time spent in resolving these factors, it often happens that the area to be preserved is swallowed up. Even more formidable is the broad-scale conservation problem raised by the spread of urbanism - Megalopolis - in such places as the northeastern part of the United States.

What Business Can Do

The business man asks what industry can do. And he answers his question by stating that business and industry can offer support to groups studying the principles and problems of conservation. It can use its good offices to help citizens get information. It can make available to other organizations, and coordinate within its own ranks, the daily experience it is acquiring through its operations.

But, the Standard Oil man says, probably the most effective contribution industry can make is at the community level.

"Here industry's efforts," he says, "might range from participation in long-range studies and plans for community expansion to the *practical steps of actually acquiring threatened areas with its own funds* or helping organizations presently set up to do this work - and turning them over as gifts to established public or private bodies. It would seem that the most practical, immediate action in the field of conservation is to preserve specific areas of land before they are overrun and lost forever."

The Nature Conservancy is pleased to have these admirable statements from the fields of banking and industry reflect the goals of our organization.

NATURAL AREAS and COLLEGE TEACHING

It is a tantalizing problem to suggest how modern undergraduates might gain a wider and deeper education from the immediate landscape of their college days and the wider terrain brought close at hand by the automobile, Edgar Anderson, Fellow of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences, Palo Alto, writes in the Winter 1959-1960 issue of *Landscape,* published in Santa Fe.

"The problem is tantalizing because there are so many different ways in which a solution might be attempted. The Dartmouth example suggests that indirect methods might in the end be more successful than merely going up to the student and saying, 'Now here is some landscape. Go ahead and study it.' It is tantalizing too because one has the feeling that a really good solution should be helped quite as much as hindered by the presence of automobiles. If, a century ago, undergraduates consciously and unconsciously derived certain values from the restricted landscapes immediately available to *them,* how much more might we now hope to achieve with hundreds of square miles encompassable within a few hours?

"If the problem were handed over to me for a practical solution, I should be tempted to follow somewhat upon the *path laid down by Sir Patrick Geddes* in the studies of city and country which eventually led him and his students into town and city planning. I should like

(Continued on page 9)

CONFUCIUS MAY BE RIGHT!

Confucius said a *good* picture is worth 10,000 words. We accentuate the word good because a bad picture is worse than nothing at all.

We here in Washington need good pictures of our Nature Conservancy projects. Not many of us can visit the lovely spots that we are preserving. But we can visit them vicariously through photographs.

Most cameras now take good, sharp pictures that can be enlarged to the regular newspaper 8x10 glossy size most suitable for reproduction. The enlargement costs about 50 cents each. A modest enough investment for something that is worth 10,000 words.

We urge you to send us your best pictures. We shall try to run as many as our space permits. And don't forget those all-important captions.

THE EDITOR

NEWS OF NATURAL AREAS

Chapter Notes

ORANGE-SAN DIEGO COUNTIES CHAPTER

W. Patrick Milburn, Chapter Chairman reports:

Buena Vista Lagoon

The preservation of the Buena Vista Lagoon between Oceanside and Carlsbad was approved as a project of The Nature Conservancy by the Board of Governors on April 30, 1960. A loan of $2500 to cover expenses necessary to the establishment of the project was approved, and a fund-raising goal of $25,000 was set as a tentative figure pending further knowledge of costs. The first meeting of the Buena Vista Lagoon Project Committee was held in Oceanside on May 21, 1960. The committee members present chose the officers. Mr. David Rorick accepted the position of Project Chairman. Mr. Otto Gerth accepted the position of Legal Counsel. Mrs. Arthur Shaw accepted the position of Secretary. Other members of the committee include: Mr. George LaPointe, Mr. Scott Boyles, Mr. Donald Blaitz, Mr. George Grober, Mr. George Hillam, Miss Ruth Coates, Mrs. Keith, Mrs. Phillip Roth.

The Program of land acquisition has begun. Mr. Gerth reports that a number of parcels of submerged land of the central lagoon are now held by deed in the name of the Conservancy and that other properties are being processed as they are given by the owners. When this phase of the program is completed, the committee will undertake the acquisition of lands that cannot be given directly.

We have had reports that the state has introduced Threadfin Shad into the Lagoon. The Chapter officers have lodged a protest to this procedure as it endangers the management of the mosquito fish in the Lagoon that have been planted there for mosquito control. Likewise the public may be encouraged to trespass on the private lands of property owners and of the Conservancy to fish there. It is probable that the shad will die out in time unless continually reintroduced.

An article about The Nature Conservancy in the West is being prepared by Mr. Andrew Hamilton for *Westways Magazine*. Mention will be made in the article of the Buena Vista Lagoon with perhaps a picture of the area.

Other Areas

The Upper Bay at Newport Beach is being dredged now and the fine freshwater marsh along the west side has been drained, plowed, and destroyed as a subdivision is prepared. The Lomita Gun Club land, northwest of Bolsa Chica and adjacent to Anaheim Slough has been sold and is under development into a marina.

The Santa Ana River levees have suffered deforestation by the Orange County Flood Control authorities which has converted the river into a barren trough from the Santa Ana Canyon to the Sea. This move, clearly poor conservation practice has destroyed the habitat of many species of birds--warblers, chats, songsparrows, orioles, small animals, insects, and plants. This last-mentioned destruction should keep us on our toes to watch for such efforts so that they may be stopped before the damage is begun.

Suggestions have been made by Mrs. Rood of Anza that certain areas containing *Adenostoma sparsifelium* of Red Shank in Eastern San Diego County might well be made the object of a Nature Conservancy Project. The possibility is under advisement.

A suggestion from members in Orange County to consider the preservation of a portion of Black Star Canyon in the Santa Ana Mountains as a project has undergone some investigation. The canyon is threatened by a proposed real estate development. Numerous ownerships complicate the problem.

The Torrey Pines Association has appealed to the Conservancy for assistance in stopping plans of the State Parks Commission to drain and fill the migratory shore bird salt-water marsh adjacent to Torrey Pines for the development of public camps sites. It is reported that Mr. DeWitt Nelson, Director of the State Parks, is asking for funds to carry out a

study of the area during the coming year. Members of our Chapter and of other conservation organizations must prepare to express to the State Park authorities the importance of preservation of this area.

The Orange County Bird Club has secured the permission of the Orange County Supervisors to develop a natural area and nature trail in Irvine Park for the use of schools and youth groups.

CHAPTER NOTES:

MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Chapter Secretary Mrs. Kathleen Anderson reports:

A small meeting was held at noon on August 10, 1960 at the Campus Club of the University of Minnesota. Present were Drs. Breckenridge and Morley; Messrs. Badger, Danielson, Luick, and Tusler; and Mrs. Anderson.

Dr. Breckenridge reported on a conversation he had had with Mr. James Kimball, head of the Game and Fish Division of the State Department of Conservation. Mr. Kimball's proposal was that a large piece of land, including as much prairie as possible, be set aside in the northwestern part of the state as a strictly natural area with perhaps even a small herd of bison. He suggested roughly 36 square miles. The public would be allowed on the piece only to observe - no camping, picnicing, etc. Dr. Breckenridge suggested that we make an expression of interest in this project, and the secretary was instructed to write to Mr. Kimball to this effect.

Mr. Tusler asked if we could return to the National Chapter the $300 which had been advanced to us. Mr. Badger moved that we do so; motion seconded and carried.

Dr. Morley checked the piece of land at Balsam Lake, Wisconsin, and found it very desirable. He has turned the information over to the Wisconsin Chapter for action. There has been no further action on the Brownton Prairie because it appears obvious that the owner will not sell.

Koochiching County

This consists of two separate forties which are very swampy and wet. One forty is stagnant with little drainage; the other is more open and not too interesting. It was recommended that they go ahead with the first forty.

Dr. Morley got a map of the areas in which the Hennepin County Park Association is interested. Mrs. Clausen reported on six or eight of the areas, and Dr. Morley sent the Baker Foundation a copy of the report.

Malmberg Prairie

The owner is anxious to sell at $2000 per year for six years. We have approval for purchase and authorization of a loan for the first $2000 from Washington. Mr. Tusler brought up the matter of weed control; the feeling was that the weeds would be slowly squeezed out when the ground is not disturbed by machinery. We have the rest of the year to consider this before the owner does anything with the land.

Dr. Morley told us that the Wisconsin Chapter had circularized the membership of the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences regarding The Nature Conservancy.

Dr. Lawrence is still trying to get a list of University of Minnesota lands but with no success as yet.

Mr. Badger has been working with the Northern States Power Company regarding their piece of land on the St. Croix River. The Northern States meeting with Mr. Badger and Dr. Morley opened up the whole question of the company's holdings. The officers of the company voted to have a survey made of every piece of land they hold that is not being used. There will be no action until that survey is completed. The officers were sympathetic to Nature Conservancy proposals, but it will be at least two years before they are ready to commit themselves. Mr. Badger suggested that we might contact Mr. King and discuss three or four pieces in which we are particularly interested, but final decision is in the hands of the officers.

Northern States Power Company is trying to give the island near Dr. Breckenridge's home to the University; if they will not take it, it may go to Nature Conservancy.

Mr. Badger will start next week compiling a list of tax delinquent properties in Clay, Norman, and Polk Counties.

Dr. Morley, Dr. Lawrence, and Mr. Tusler talked with Mr. George Selke of the Conservation Department regarding possible cooperation on his proposed project of establishing a park along the Mississippi River from the Iowa border up to the Twin Cities. The plans are not yet definite, but he would apparently welcome our support. They are trying to get all the hardwood forests along the tributaries of the Mississippi River.

Second Annual Meeting

Just before going to press, *The News* received the minutes of the second annual meeting of the Minnesota Chapter. Some of the highlights will be mentioned here, although not as many as we would like because of our limited space.

Officers for the coming year are: Mr. Paul Clement, chairman; Mr. Carl Danielson, vice-chairman; Mrs. Kathleen Anderson, secretary; and Mr. H. C. Luick, treasurer.

Trustees are: Mrs. John E. P. Morgan, Mrs. Richard Gale, Mr. W. H. Tusler, Dr. Donald Lawrence, Dr. Thomas Morley, Dr. W. J. Breckenridge, Dr. Sigurd Olson, and Dr. Max Partch.

Mr. Tusler reported that the trustees had voted to purchase the Crookston Prairie, an 80-acre tract near Crookston, Minnesota, for $12,000. The national organization has agreed to advance the first $2,000 as a loan without interest.

It was also reported that the trustees had voted to purchase the Winger Prairie for $3500. It is an 80-acre tract adjacent to and south of the Cedar Creek Forest owned by the University of Minnesota.

Mr. Richard Pough, former president of The Nature Conservancy, attended both the annual and the trustees' meeting.

CHAPTER NOTES:

NEW VIRGINIA CHAPTER

A new Virginia chapter of The Nature Conservancy was organized in Richmond on November 16 at the home of Mrs. John H. Bocock.

Chapter officers are: Dr. Ruskin Freer, Lynchburg College, Lynchburg, chairman; Mr. Fred Packard, Executive Director, Fairfax County Park Authority, Fairfax, vice-chairman; Mrs. James W. Wiltshire, professor of zoology, Randolph-Macon Womens' College, secretary; and Mr. Eustace Poor, treasurer.

Board Trustees are: Mr. FitzGerald Bemiss, Richmond; Mrs. Bocock; Dr. Franklin Flint; Mr. George Freeman, Richmond; Dorothy Crandall, professor of botany, Randolph-Macon Womens' College; Mrs. Frank Carr, Richmond; and Mrs. Edward M. Davis, Richmond.

Members and others reported present at the meeting included the following:

Judge and Mrs. Ralph Catterall, Richmond; Mr. Monroe Bush, Washington; Mr. Al Rachal, State Department of Conservation and Economic Development; Dr. F. Raymond Fosberg, Falls Church; Mr. Randolph Odell, State Commissioner of Parks; Mr. George Deane, State Forester; Mrs. Wiltshire; Mrs. Frank Wendt, Richmond; Miss Crandall; Mr. Joseph Shomon, Editor, *Virginia Wildlife;* Mr. Scott Segars, McLean; Miss Kathleen Walker, Maryland; Mr. Philip Jessup, attorney, Washington and Charlottesville; Miss Mary Anne Shelley, Washington; Mr. Elbert Cox, regional director, National Park Service; Mrs. John Skelton Williams, Richmond; Mrs. Leon Dure, Keswick, Conservation Chairman, Garden Club of Virginia; Mrs. Edward M. Davis, Richmond; Mr. and Mrs. Freeman; Mr. L. J. Hammack, Lawrenceville attorney; Mrs. Carr; Mrs. A. B. Schad, Richmond; Mrs. Bocock; Dr. Freer; Mr. and Mrs. Bemiss; Mr. Packard, and Mr. Don Stough, executive director of The Nature Conservancy, Washington.

A committee will be appointed by Dr. Freer to draw up a statement of objectives for the new chapter.

The new chapter is heartily welcomed!

CHAPTER NOTES:

OHIO CHAPTER

At the October 28 meeting at the Washington Hotel, Washington Court House, various natural areas which have come up for board discussion in the past were reviewed. A tentative listing of their current priority was made up, as follows:

Active list: top priority and action under way in some cases - Dysart Woods, Clifton Gorge, Mentor Marsh, Little Rocky and Pintail Marsh.

Deferred list: Areas not in immediate danger but where preservation would be desirable - Cedar Fork, Bolle's Gulch, Rock Run, Kibler's Bog, Thomas Ross Bog, Greenhill's Heronry, and Sunderland Falls. Areas where preservation is desirable, but where they are currently in "good" hands - Brown's Lake Bog, Crall Woods, Hart-in-Geauga and Laurel Ridge.

Inactive list: Areas preserved in Nature Conservancy or similar ownership - Lynx Prairie, Buzzardroost Rock, and Stebbins Gulch. Areas not presently worthy of preservation - White's Gulch and Cedar Falls.

Among the outstanding areas are Little Rocky, an undisturbed virgin hemlock forest located in a gorge adjacent to the Hocking State Forest, and Dysart Woods, a 44-acre stand of virgin hardwood forest located near St. Clairsville, Belmont County. This forest may well be the only remaining virgin hardwood stand in unglaciated southeastern Ohio. The Chapter voted to make this forest one of their top projects.

Member J. Arthur Herrick reported that he had prepared during April a summary listing of 126 natural areas for which he had some data.

CHAPTER NOTES:

MICHIGAN NATURAL AREAS COUNCIL

At the October 21 meeting of the Council the following officers were elected:

Mr. Alex Smith, chairman; Mr. John Churchill, vice-chairman; Mr. Peter Kaufman, secretary; Mr. Warren Stoutamire, treasurer, and Messers Dale Hagenah and Peter Stettenheim, directors.

Mr. Murray Buell has been named as The Nature Conservancy's representative to the Council.

Mr. Ed Voss mentioned an item signed by H. K. in The Nature Conservancy News for June, 1960, indicating a desire to buy a swamp with orchids in northern Michigan. Mr. Voss wrote to this person about Mud Lake Bog near Souglas Lake. Since then the bog has been purchased by the Regents of the University of Michigan for use by the Biological Station.

Mr. Voss also mentioned that a 95-acre tract five miles north of downtown Kalamazoo had been purchased and set aside as a nature study area. In addition, $500,000 would be granted for the establishment of a museum and center for possible coordination of conservation organizations in Michigan. Those agencies or persons behind this venture were not mentioned.

Because of the increasing amount of Lycopodium (club moss) being harvested on state-owned lands in the upper Peninsula, the Council passed a motion to notify state authorities that such harvesting permits should not be granted in the future. It was estimated that between 30,000 and 100,000 pounds of club moss had been harvested in a single year.

CHAPTER NOTES:

LONG ISLAND CHAPTER

The Autumn issue of "Sanctuary," the small quarterly publication of the Long Island Chapter has just arrived. The Editor of *The Nature Conservancy News* would like to compliment the editor of "Sanctuary" - whose name and address is not given in the publication - upon the interesting publication. The descriptions of the natural areas on Long Island are first-rate. The publication could serve as a model of writing about natural areas and why they are of value to ecologists and the general public.

CHAPTER NOTES:

WEST VIRGINIA PROJECT

A press account released in October by Dr. Earl L. Core, Chairman of the West Virginia Chapter of Nature Conservancy reports acquisition of 256 acres of Cranesville Swamp in Preston County.

The story received excellent publicity in the local press. All accounts carried news of The Nature Conservancy and its national preservation policies and the role it played in the transaction.

NATURAL AREAS AND COLLEGE TEACHING

(CONTINUED)

to try centering the work in a large classroom or hall with good light and as much wall space as possible. (An unused barn or barracks would be excellent.) With the class doing most of the work, integrated by conferences and regular lectures, we would get together for our own mutual education a kind of semi-temporary exhibition of the college's immediate landscapes and the hinterlands beyond. We would begin with the simple things immediately available, auto maps, city maps, state and national geological survey maps. We would explore the human ecology, the geology, the history of the area. We naturally might, since I am a botanist, look as closely as possible at one or two plants of particular significance for the area. In coastal California this could be the introduced eucalyptus and the weed oats; in Kansas, wheat and wild sunflowers; in New York City, the Tree of Heaven and one or two of the tropical aroids so ubiquitous in that city's living rooms. As the year went on, individual students and groups of students would be encouraged to go as deeply as possible into significant local situations, presenting their finding in reports and displays, with diagrams, photographs, and maps. Some displays might prove pertinent enough to leave up from year to year. Others would be removed or revised before the end of the course. Wall space, large celotex panels, plenty of good thumb tacks, and a bus or station wagon would be our chief basic materials.

Such a community exhibit could be the center for the work of an elementary class one semester and for an advanced seminar the next. Depending upon curricular needs it could be closely identified with biology or with geography or with history or with none of these or with all three together. Teaching it in such a way that dullards were awakened, that the brilliant and enthusiastic few did not do most of the work and get most of the benefit, that special skills (as in drawing or photography were put to effective use, would be a stiff assignment for any teacher.) Yet, if after some preliminary failures (or qualified successes), such a course could be taught effectively it would benefit the students, the college, the community and the teacher himself."

MEN AND MONEY AGAINST MACHINES

To fight our common enemy The Bulldozer, two of the Conservancy's immediate needs are money and memberships. To increase both, we are asking our present members to help us recruit new members, either by directly soliciting, or by sending us names of persons to whom we can write.

In addition, we are starting this fall a new class of membership called an Operation '65 membership. To qualify, you only have to agree to renew your membership each year between now and 1965 and to help us recruit an average of one new member each year. If all of our present members would agree to do this, it would be of tremendous help to us in carrying on our work.

Appropriate blanks are included in the renewal notices being sent out this year. We hope that you will do all you can to help us with our plan.

A BIOCENTRIC CONCEPT

By Kenneth W. Hunt

Head of the Botany Department and Former Chairman of The Nature Conservancy Ohio Chapter

Presumably, in the remote past, as ape men contested with other beasts of prey, scarcely any life had significance beyond one's own.

In times less distant, though men were learning sympathy one for another, small value extended to the lives of enemy tribes, defeated peoples, infidels, "inferior" races. Any suggestion that such creatures deserved consideration was considered quite irrational.

We have come a long way since then, though our concept of the sacredness of all human life is still too easily forgotten. Yet as we continue to learn this, should we feel that our civilizing process is nearing its completion? May not our respect for life undergo yet further development? For by what authority do we consider the life of mankind alone to be of consequence upon this earth?

I wish to suggest that we expand our thinking to regard life as no monopoly of man, but as a process operating through the myriads of organisms, spreading across time and space, involving man at present, and leading to unpredictable new capacities of consciousness and creativity. In this perspective the civilized outlook becomes not what the living world can do for man, but how the human society can most suitably function as part of the great community of life.

The significance of life remains probably the profoundest of questions that engage the human mind. We recognize that life does not exist apart from death. Individual life must come and go if life as a whole is to continue. The substances temporarily incorporated in one organism are soon released to earth or sea where they are available again for the use of other organisms; or one unit of life is used directly as nourishment for another in the food chains of existence. If we think it harsh that the predator kills the prey, is it any less harsh that the predator starves if the prey eludes it? We have to acknowledge that we humans could not exist were it not for the life we take. There is life even in plants, and in the micro-organisms that cause disease. We therefore have ordinarily settled for the attitude that life is not necessarily valuable *per se*, but only in those forms which seem to to us the "higher."

Consciousness and Life

Our inclination is to respect life according to its degree of perceptible consciousness. On this basis we feel quite indifferent to the existence of life in plants, as well as in insects and other lower animals. Mammals, on the other hand, strongly impress us as conscious living beings, evoking in us affection, fear, or the challenge of the chase. Among our own kind the depth of our feeling for each other is usually in proportion to how well we understand each other's sensibilities. Thus it seems that the more conscious and communicative the nature of another life, the more its appeal to us, and the greater our sorrow if it is lost. Though we know that all life is mortal, we try to alter the biotic balance in favor of those particular lives which we most understand - beginning still, of course, with our individual selves!

Communication, then, seems a key to our attitude. If so, our feeling of the uniqueness of human life is based on the relative ease of communication among humans. Savagery between alien tribes may have been due in part to failure to recognize the other's unintelligible sounds as a form of speech. Savagery of humans toward animals may be due to our underestimation of animal consciousness, for lack of means of communication. I suspect there is great difference among us in our capacity to experience communication with non-human life. There are some individuals who seem very superior in this capacity. To persist in the idea that only human life is significant may be to retard our own development as sentient beings.

What, after all, do we gain by this idea of exclusive quality of human life? Whether or not it has helped us, it has been costly indeed to life as a whole. Our civilization seems to be engaged in a process of replacing the marvelous diversity of life on this planet with three categories only: man, his livestock, and his crops. Particularly in the last two centuries we have been accelerating this process, producing a phenomenal and geometrical increase in human population. By logical projection we may postulate the time when there is room for nothing but man, subsisting on chemical nourishment. For the purpose of this discussion we can lay aside the consequences to the soil, the water cycle, the atmosphere, the landscape. The point is: what will we have gained by the destruction of all life but our own? I hardly think it conceivable we could have dispensed with the sorrow of death. If that were possible, we would be required by reasons of overpopulation to dispense with the excitement of birth and development. No, as I see it, favoring our own kind exclusively can lead only to the impoverishment of the experience of life.

The alternative to this fantasy would be the concept that the whole community of life is entitled to our respect, and that human life is best experienced not as a separate thing but as a sharing of that wholeness of life. We would seek to acquire a sense of communication with the entire life process. This is similar, I believe, to what Dr. Albert Schweitzer calls "Reverence for Life." By this concept we would aim to maintain the fullest abundance and diversity of life on earth. Death would of course be acknowledged as a part of the life process, but wanton destruction would be opposed as a violation of the process. Human population, which our technology has freed from natural checks, would be voluntarily stabilized in order to allow the other forms of life their normal opportunity. Where particular species are in danger of extinction by reason of human disruption of environment, measures would be sought to restore the balance. On the other hand, genetic and geologic change independent of human action would probably not be opposed. The premise of this program would be that earth's life is an entity in process of diversification and evolution, with ourselves as its present most conscious and responsible part. Our objective would be to advance our own capacities as thinking members of this whole, while maintaining the entire system in good condition--much as a person cultivates his mind, but not at the expense of general bodily health. Our satisfaction as individuals would be as participants of the greater living whole. To the degree that we feel identified with this ultimate life we would achieve release from the fear and grief of individual death.

Biocentric Concept

This concept which I have been supporting might be called a biocentric one, in contrast to the customary anthropocentric attitude. If, as I believe, it is a more accurate and rewarding concept, it still remains for it to become an emotionally effective one. This will probably result only through generations of growth as a new cultural tradition. Such concepts as love and integrity have been shaping very gradually in our culture, and are still honored more in word than in deed. Yet we earnestly strive to foster and transmit these qualities. We advocate all practices which seem to support them, and discourage whatever seems to undermine them.

What measures, then, will serve to foster the biocentric concept? How do we enlarge our understanding of life itself, and our capacity for a sense of communication with this whole in which we have our being? It would seem that whatever sensitizes us to life would help. This might include attention to life's beauties, sympathetic observation of the ways of plants and animals, exploration of relationships of organisms to each other, discovery of life's continuity in space and time, all the excitement of seeking an understanding of existence. On the other hand, it would seem that whatever sets us apart from life is a hindrance. This could be inattention, indifference, thoughtless destruction of other life, unnecessary disruption or exploitation of life's processes.

We do not lack for interpreters. The biocentric concept is found in the writings of Aldo Leopold, Joseph Wood Krutch, Rachel Carson, and Sally Carrighar, to mention a few. Arthur E.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

2039 K Street N. W.
Washington 6, D. C.

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Dr. Richard H. Goodwin
Connecticut College
New London, Conn.
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Morgan discusses it in his *Search for Purpose*. These are people with long and intimate experience in the out-of-doors. Such experience is denied to most of us, or we think it is. But is our divorcement from the rest of life necessary or desirable? In a growing number of communities, the answer is no. This is the reason for the vigorous increase in nature preserves, nature museums, interpretive services in parks, public school forests, and public school camps.

The New Education

This new interest in the life around us is already having its effect on educational philosophy. Just as fifty years ago educators discovered the human body, with the result that gymnasia are standard in schools today, so they are discovering the living mantle of our earth, and presently every community may have its outdoor education center. If no true wilderness remains accessible to a community -- and this unfortunately is the general case -- a new community natural area may become established, where the intricacies of life can be restored through ecologic management plus the healing of time.

These community natural areas can add new dimensions to human experience, leading to satisfactions beyond the scope of our present anthropocentric attitude. Through their influence, man's predatory effect on life and land may become increasingly adjusted to that sensitive measure required for the optimum health of the whole living community. His management of the earth would then be no longer egocentric nor anthropocentric, but biocentric, in the interest of more abundant life.

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NOTICE OF MEETING

John W. Brainerd, Springfield College, Springfield, Massachusetts, reports that there will be an open meeting of the National Committee for Schools, December 27, at 2 p.m., at the Biltmore Hotel, New York. The National Committee is meeting in conjunction with the annual sessions of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

A copy of the newest brochure of The Nature Conservancy, ***"Vanishing Natural Areas of the United States"*** may be obtained by members on request. There is a limited supply.